

CLAIMS

We claim:

- 1 1. A hand tool for immobilizing a T-connector, the hand
2 tool comprising:
3 an elongated handle portion;
4 a head portion fixed to said handle portion, the head
5 portion having means for capturing two aligned nuts of said T-
6 connector.
- 1 2. The hand tool of claim 1, wherein said means for
2 capturing two aligned nuts of said T-connector comprises a pair
3 of rigid claws, each claw including an interior surface sized to
4 capture a corresponding one of said two aligned nuts of said T-
5 connector thereby preventing lateral movement of the two aligned
6 nuts.
- 1 3. The hand tool of claim 1, wherein said handle portion
2 and said head portion are removably attached using a snap
3 connection.

1 4. The hand tool of claim 3, wherein said snap connection
2 comprises a lug extending from one of said handle portion and
3 said head portion, said lug extending into a hole formed in
4 another of said handle portion and said head portion, said lug
5 including a snap connector having a spring-loaded ball bearing
6 engaging a detent formed in the hole.

1 5. The hand tool of claim 4, wherein said lug is formed on
2 said handle portion and said hole is formed into said head
3 portion.

1 6. The hand tool of claim 3, wherein each claw includes an
2 interior cylindrical surface that extends a majority around a
3 circumference of a cylinder.

1 7. The hand tool of claim 6, wherein an axis of said
2 cylinder is parallel to an axis of said handle portion.

1 8. The hand tool of claim 6, wherein an axis of said
2 cylinder is generally perpendicular to an axis of said handle
3 portion.

1 9. The hand tool of claim 3, wherein each said claw
2 comprises a pair of jaws adapted for extending around a
3 respective side of one of the aligned nuts and preventing lateral
4 movement of the nut.

1 10. A T-connector holding tool, comprising:

2 a handle having a grip portion and a mounting lug extending
3 from the grip portion;

4 a head having a cylindrical body, the cylindrical body
5 having a bore defined therein, the mounting lug being removably
6 inserted into the bore in order to attach the head to the handle;
7 and

8 first and second claws attached to the cylindrical body in
9 parallel, spaced relation, each of the claws having a pair of
10 jaws dimensioned and configured for simultaneously gripping
11 coaxially aligned nuts of a T-connector in order to prevent
12 rotation of the T-connector when adjusting a nut on stem of the
13 T-connector.

1 11. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 10,
2 wherein said lug has a square drive adjacent the grip portion.

1 12. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 11,
2 wherein said square drive further comprises a spring-biased ball
3 bearing extending from the square drive.

1 13. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 12,
2 wherein said lug has a cylindrical end portion.

1 14. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 13,
2 wherein the bore defined in the cylindrical body of said head has
3 a square shaped bottom end having at least one detent hole
4 defined therein, the ball bearing snapping into the detent hole
5 to temporarily secure said head to said handle, and a

6 cylindrically shaped top end receiving the cylindrical end
7 portion of said mounting lug.

1 15. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 10,
2 wherein each said claw has a smooth, arcuate, cylindrical
3 interior surface.

1 16. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 10,
2 wherein said bore extends axially through said cylindrical body.

1 17. The T-connector holding tool according to claim 10,
2 wherein said bore extends transversely through said cylindrical
3 body.

1 18. A method of tightening a third nut of a T-connector,
2 comprising the steps of:

3 applying a torque to the third nut;

4 concomitantly immobilizing the T-connector, including:

5 capturing aligned first and second nuts of the T-
6 connector; and

7 applying a counteracting torque to the T-connector, the
8 counteracting torque being opposite the torque applied to
9 the third nut.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein said step of applying a
2 counteracting torque comprises applying opposite lateral forces
3 to the first and second nuts, the opposite lateral forces
4 combining to form the counteracting torque on an axis coincident
5 with an axis of the third nut in a direction opposite to the
6 torque applied to the third nut.

1 20. The method of claim 18, wherein
2 said capturing step comprises at least partially encircling
3 each the first nut and the second nut with first and second claws
4 of a T-connector holding tool; and
5 said applying a counteracting torque step comprises applying
6 a lateral force to a handle fixed to said first and second claws,
7 the lateral force being communicated as opposite lateral forces
8 applied to the first nut and the second nut, thereby providing a
9 torque about an axis coincident with an axis of the third nut.

1 21. The method of claim 18, wherein said capturing step
2 comprises:
3 selecting a head having a pair of claws sized and configured
4 to fit over the first and second nuts of the T-connector;
5 attaching the head to a handle; and
6 axially sliding the claws over the first and second nuts.